

WASHINGTON, D. C., SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 28, 1896.

## FIREWORKS IN SILVER AND GOLD

PATRIOTISM BOUNDED BY VACANT LOTS OR BY 16 TO 1

Timely Suggestions to the Commissioners, Major Moore, and the Gentlemen Soon to Gather in the Windy City.

Eminent pyrotechnic authorities are agreed for once that the peace of Europe has never been so directly threatened by the United States as now, since the time Bonaparte's fireworks broke up the Ducal of Richmond's ball at Brussels.

Spain, they say, has turned in a general fire alarm; her queen has a bad case of imperial hysteria. Americans, and Alphonso has sent the helmet of Don Quixote to the royal blacksmith to be battered down to the size of the Bourbon hair cut.

Gen. Harrison, of England, has ruthlessly dragged a surveyor's chain over the Schomberg line, and obliterated it in several places for which offense he has been sent down for thirty days by Judge Crespo. America will be held responsible for this inasmuch as it provided a Venezuelan boundary commission to say where and where not Gen. Harrison could stake off British-Guiana city lots and, so far, the only line drawn by the said commission is a line to the summer resorts. Their furniture, which cost \$8,000, is supposed, however, to be fully insured. America, besides, is regarded as the wet nurse of all of the South American infant phenomena.

An English missionary is on the way to raise an American army to drive the unappealable Turk and the unpronounceable Russian out of the inaccessible Armenia, in which even the ark merely got a foothold on the top of a mountain.

Gen. Weyler threatens to run over here this summer and stop the press.

We will undoubtedly, they say, get into a scrimmage with Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Belgium, over the possession of the Greenland aerolite.

The passage of the filled-chess bill is proof for a new Thirty Years' War with the Netherlands and the Swiss and Limburger republics, and in general the Oriental sky wears a slaughter-house hue.

Our only allies at present appear to be the French colonists of Louisiana and the Italian open-air musical colony of this city. The Interstate Democratic Association is, of course, regarded as being with us.

## ORIGIN OF IT ALL.

All this, and more, which has been mislaid in the business office, is directly traceable to the recent fireworks convention at St. Louis. We may be at war with the whole world and the mining districts of the West by the time the pyrotechnic storm center has passed Chicago.

This enumeration doesn't include the purely local fireworks war now actually being waged in the District. We do not like to denigrate oratory lectures, but on this occasion we have the opinion that the aggressive thinking faculty of all the people of the District is against the "Commissioners of Firecrackers." Bloody internecine war has been precipitated for a much less cause of war (casus belli) than the abridgment of the constitutional right of the small United States boy to blow the baby or any other residing force on the 4th of July into eternity with a cannon cracker.

There is no warrant in the Constitution, even under its elastic general welfare clause, for a Fourth of July in Spain. As we understand it, Col. John Wilson, who is merely superintendent of grounds, and not of firecrackers or red Bengal fire, has undertaken to set some force in certain parks that sky rockets will hit the ceiling and fall innocuous to the grass. This would be bad enough, but the Engineer Commissioner has calculated, at an im-

mease and lavish expenditure of time and logarithms, that if a Roman candle (blue or red light optional) is fired up perpendicularly it will not come down paradoxically, and hence the surrounding houses with tin or slate roofs will have a certain immunity from conflagration. Secretary Tindal of the Board of Rockets and Set Pieces agrees with the Engineer Commissioner on the mathematics of the case, but dissents entirely as to the ethics.

The president of the board is understood to be in favor of the more drastic measure of permitting no firecrackers to be exploded or otherwise injured except within a radius of twelve feet from a park fountain basin. The Police Commissioner has perhaps issued the wisest of all the Spot Fourth of July firmans. He is credited with a precautionary provision that no scorching shall carry the common Chinese cracker, the extraordinary red American cannon, gun cotton, Jovite, dynamite, or any other combustible, in, about, under, or among his or her shirt waist, coat, pants (male or female), on the Fourth proximo. The reason for this is obvious.

## WHEN THE FUN WILL COME.

In our opinion, the clash of arms will come when the major of police and the janitor charge the children, and try to round them up, as it were, in 1896 Spots. It is a clear case of discrimination. Just now the sons and daughters of the Virginia Fathers of Massachusetts avenue, and other Mayflower districts of the northwest, have left the city for a free country, and can fire the festive cracker with the untrammelled, unburnt finger.

Those who are left, forsooth, are to be herded like lands and driven to indiscriminate slaughter of each other in the government reservations with overloaded gas-pipe cannon and toy guns with hair triggers. When children go out to blow themselves they are just as likely to go up as down.

We confidently look for a repetition of the scenes of the Paris commune, and we doubt very much if all the debris of Major Moore and the police force will have been removed from the streets in time for the Times bicycle pageant, should Young America resist this aggression to the death.

It ought to be easy for the Prefect of the Potomac to see exactly what will happen. It will take the whole force and the fire department to keep order and to subdue the flames at even one of these Fourth of July spots for sports. If, on the other hand, the young people get the charley horse and refuse to celebrate in such captivity, but hold conventions in the backyards, their fathers and mothers will have rented houses to burn sure enough, and that's no joke. It should, of course, be remembered that we assume no responsibility for the opinions of the correspondents who furnished the incendiary pabulum for this page.

We nevertheless think that there is great danger of a local civil war from what we have heard from the southwest. Most of the children there inherit a military genius, for proof of which read the war of the late rebellion, with special reference to Joe Hooker's picnic in the First police precinct.

## THINGS THAT THREATEN.

We are in for free trade, or a sufficiency thereof, free gold, free Cuba, and a free Fourth of July.

As we began to say the fire sky rocket or boom is a dangerous element in politics. It is the Alpha and Omega of the lives of a great many men whose footprints on the way home remind us that an election as a delegate-at-large is no cinch on the Pres-

## BOOMS AND BOMBS OF THE FOURTH

INDEPENDENCE DAY THOUGHTS POLITICAL AND MUNICIPAL

Red Fire and Rockets That Have Been and May Be, With Special Reference to the Chicago Flower Pot.

dency. Even in the brief span of our own checkered, and mostly checkmated career, we have seen a sky rocket rise in all the splendor of a new tin god in the State of Maine and sink out of sight in the pluff mud of St. Louis.

A tracing of this career will be found in the margin.

We have also seen a similar meteor blaze across the sky from Albany and burst high in the sky in Missouri. It could find no place in St. Louis, not even a second place. Concomitantly with these will be noted the illustrations representing the rise and fall of the various 22-bore rockets which blazed across the firmament and which dropped into the mill pond at Canton, Ohio, where they were snuffed out.

It will, perhaps, be observed that these rockets have left the political atmosphere full of gold dust. It would also be noted that some of the rockets had wet fuses and did not stream or sizzle to any great extent. These were principally the Colorado and Utah articles.

And now comes the pyrotechnic party with the silver dust rockets and fire crackers which are being shipped by the cord to Chicago. There has already been organized on the grounds a party which is in view as engaged in a shadow dance. The gentlemen who appear in black or silhouetted suits are the dark horses and they are mostly mustangs from the "perairie region." There is no telling where these folks have in store to disturb our present foreign relations. It is believed that one of the rockets will be for the immediate embrace of Colombia and Cuba another for the Canadian land grab and a certain third is the bringing back of Colorado into the Union.

## SOME CONTRABAND ROCKETS.

There is at present a rumor that the New York and Maryland rockets will not be among the accredited stock of fireworks. This will not prevent the July ratification at Chicago. Boles, Band, Tillman, Allright and Col. Jack Chinn have filled the flower pot to the brim with the most lurid, if not brilliant, of meteors, and the grand stands of the West and South are waiting for the show with matches.

It is evident that the politicians don't intend to do a thing with this country, but to keep it red hot all day and ablaze of fire all night until the weather and the other party cools off in November. Estimates already in indicate the burning of 4,000,000 pounds of pulverized gun-powder in rockets and Roman candles, 2,000,000 pounds of Bengal powder and Greek fire, 3,500,000 boxes of common crackers, and 2,300,000 cannon crackers. These are the figures for organization work. There will also be 2,000,000 pampas grass plumes on one side and 2,000,000 pitchforks on the other.

The unattached party, under Senator Teller, has not yet selected its motto, or a shibboleth of any kind, but it will probably be some kind of a trust. Most people think, at present, that it will be the In God We Trust. This kind of trust will practically be something new in American politics, as the head of the firm referred to has generally not interfered in the family fight.

The pictorial environment of these July Fourth reflections is not intended as an exaggerated map of the visible half of the sky on any evening before the Fourth proximo, and certainly not after the date, Deo Volente, on which the boss silver rocket shall have been fired into space through the roof of the Chicago Auditorium. We look for a total obscuration of the Dog Star and one continuous illumination, and bombardment of the sky with chunks of stuff

out of the bottomless pit of Ananias. Among other things we expect to see the boss bullies of both parties strutting around this country with chips on their shoulders during the drier Queen of Spain or fight, while Fitzhugh Lee and Weyler are playing pool for the drinks in the palace of the captain general.

## THINGS THAT MAY HAPPEN.

We expect to see Free Trade Tillman advocating a protective tariff on his gold-bug contentment, and we expect to hear of Mr. Watney resuming his postponed trip to Europe. In truth, Mr. Watney, Mr. Hill, Mr. Gorman and even Mr. Cleveland have apparently concluded that they have not been invited either to the fireworks or the ensuing torchlight procession. It has been very maliciously observed, however, that they have organized a funeral procession in order that they might assume the high places in that function, although they will in no way be related to the corpse.

Our own function is merely to sit on the fence in the interim and take notes of the variegated tableaux. The crisis is to be expected at Chicago. It may occur to some of the overway thinkers or other informed majority to declare specifically in the platform that there is a war of any kind in Cuba. This would be suicide for this country, which cannot afford to engage in that kind of spectacular pyrotechnics. It is easy to learn at the State Department that there is no "bell-ringing war in Cuba." They are merely fighting unofficially.

It is within the probabilities, nevertheless, that the Chicago jubilation will result in another insult to Spain and that it would be well to send at least the Fort Myer cavalry down to Chesboro Point. This may be unnecessary, as even the yellow fever inoculated Spanish Donkeys will not attempt to pass the garbage scow fleet daily cruising in those waters.

For the present, perhaps, an umbrella is all the equipment necessary to face the war clouds, present and future, always excepting the local insurrection of the Fourth of July. There is every indication that the sons of the fathers will insist on observing the Declaration of Independence in the good old-fashioned way, and that any attempt to pipe them off into the parks will be dangerous even to the magnificent body of the city's constabulary.

There is, as already maintained, no precedent for the restriction of juvenile jubilation in the Constitution or by laws of the United States nor in any of the works of Washington, Monroe, Adams or Jefferson—certainly not in any of their fireworks that we ever saw. As there are 40,000 children in the district of the firecrackers age and cult, it is estimated that as each is from two to four feet high and from several inches to a foot thick after dinner, the aggregate man will not have standing room in the few reserved parks. This estimate does not include lunch baskets, nurses, dogs, baby carriages, milk bottles and other impedimenta.

Compounding the whole mass it will reach to the first branches of the highest trees in the parks, and only the top stratum will have a chance to fire its guns.

It ought to commend itself to the judgment of the new governmental Fourth-of-July inspectors that the young firecrackers of this country have always stood for the great principles enunciated by Patrick Henry. Give us firecrackers or death.

